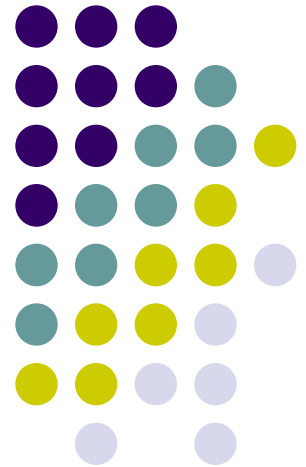


# Seattle Women's Commission

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2011 Work Plan Activities



# Summary



- The 2011 Seattle Women's Commission (SWC) work plan focused on three areas: Violence Prevention, Economic Opportunities and Health Disparities.



# Violence Prevention



- City Services for victims of Domestic Violence:
  - The SWC engaged in discussions with the Human Services Department regarding structural changes that impacted Domestic Violence services
  - Communicated with Police Chief Diaz after a Seattle Police Department domestic violence trainer was arrested for domestic violence.
  - During meetings with the Mayor and Community stakeholders, SWC advocated for Seattle police officers who serve as mentors/partners to new officers to receive training on cultural competency in domestic violence situations.



# Violence Prevention (cont.)

- SWC set out to address actions by tenant screening companies that encourage landlords to illegally withhold housing from an individual because she/he has filed for a domestic violence protection order.
  - Worked with Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, Seattle Office of Civil Rights to encourage the city to pass legislation ending tenant screening practices that disclose DV protection order information
  - Co-sponsored a two-hour forum on tenant screening with the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
  - Wrote letters to the Mayor, City Council, and department heads detailing the problems that the lack of industry regulation causes for low-income and domestic violence survivors in Washington



# Violence Prevention (cont.)

- SWC advocated for resources and policy changes to help victims of prostitution and dating violence.
  - Continued to monitor initial success indicators of the "Bridge" residential recovery program for prostituted youth and advocate for funding beyond the two-year pilot project.
  - Researched education of sexual exploitation/youth prostitution in schools through communications with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Seattle School District.
  - SWC drafted letters supporting the actions of Councilmember Burgess and Mayor McGinn with regard to backpage.com and teen prostitution.



# Economic Opportunities

- SWC sought to better understand challenges and services for homeless women, especially young women, women with children, seniors, and women in same-sex partnerships.
  - Commissioners met with homeless service providers and day shelters, toured their facilities, and spoke with the women using the services.
  - In June, the Commission brought on an intern from Harvard's Kennedy School to interview female residents of Tent City 3 the Angeline's day shelter service, focusing on issues primarily related to health care access and life for women and families in tent cities. SWC is currently using the intern's findings to develop policy recommendations to the city to address homelessness issues facing women in Seattle.
  - SWC made recommendations to the County on how budget and service cuts to Metro transportation would affect the healthcare of homeless women and families in Seattle.



# Economic Opportunities (cont.)

- From the 2010 Work Plan, the commission continued to advocate for paid sick and safe leave in Seattle.
  - SWC attended coalition meetings, public hearings, public press conferences, and “hall of fame and shame” events throughout the community.
  - SWC drafted letters, met with leaders, and phone banked to connect community members to the City Council to express their thoughts on the bill.



# Economic Opportunities (cont.)

- SWC wanted to learn about training opportunities for women who participate in programs that are funded by the 2010 federal “green jobs” grant for weatherization in Seattle.
  - Specific focus on gender inadequacy in worker retraining programs in Seattle that promote green jobs.
  - The Commission heard from women in apprenticeship programs, reviewed advertising for green jobs, and discussed enrollment in retraining programs and how it relates to gender.
  - Considering the challenges this program is facing, the Commission decided to hold off on making any recommendations and observe further in 2012.





# Health Disparities

- The federal health care legislation of 2010 produced new laws requiring businesses to allow for breaks for women to breastfeed and to build a non-restroom location for women to expel milk.
  - SWC worked to ensure awareness and enforcement of the new federal breastfeeding law among City of Seattle employers, supported legislation to update city ordinances to comply with the law.
  - Partnered with breastfeeding/health advocacy organizations to raise awareness of new federal breastfeeding law, publicize the requirements of this law among the Seattle business community.
  - SWC drafted a bill to put the enforcement of Washington law prohibiting discrimination against breastfeeding mothers in public within the realm of Seattle's Office of Civil Right. This proposed bill is currently with the legal department for review and will be introduced in 2012.



# Health Disparities (cont.)

- Over the years, SWC has remained committed to increasing the awareness of marginalized populations' access to health care and information.
  - SWC continued to educate the community about infant mortality disparities; support community partners, such as Equal Start Coalition; and bring in speakers from the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic to discuss the impacts of poverty and stress on health outcomes.
  - The SWC also partnered with the LGBT Commission to work to provide insurance coverage to transgendered city employees, an effort that was ultimately successful



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